



The Onyx Informer

Representing Black Culture at Northeastern University

Since 1972

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Scholars' commitment to hope

By Jamila Hill and
Kerrita McClaughly
Onyx Staff

Brilliant minds from various aspects of the Black intellectual community came together on October 7 in "A Night with Black Scholars."

The event, which was hosted jointly by the Black Strategic Leadership Council and the John D. O'Bryen African-American Institute, was designed to highlight Blacks within academia who were using their knowledge to try and transform the academy that they are a part of.

It is important to create the space for our presence and the ideas that we bring," said Provost Dean Hall, moderator of the event.

The evening attracted a vast array of people who attended for a myriad of reasons.

"...whenever I hear that Black scholars are speaking, well it'd be foolish not to take advantage of the opportunity," said Cyrus McQueen, Northeastern student.

Coming to these things keeps me focused on what I came here [Northeastern] for," said Marie Cheryl, a public law student.

One dominant reason, however, for the attendance of many was the special guest speaker, Dr. Cornel West.

I used to watch Cornel West on TV and I was always intrigued by his aura and just always wanted to see and hear him in person," said Octavia Ramsey, NU student.

Cornel West, professor at Harvard University and acclaimed speaker throughout the United States, was the last to address the audience for the evening. West discussed his entrance and commitment to the Black Movement as well as the importance of hope within Black struggle.

"I've always wanted to be part of a story bigger than me," West said.

West explained that Black intellectuals face a problem. With knowledge comes the freedom of understanding which can lead to pain, grief, and anxiety over the plight of the Black community.

Our work is noted in the guttural cries of Black people," West said.

West said that not allowing suffering to have the last word is the best of Black struggle.

History is about tradition of struggle," said West. "To be able to look death in the face allows you to live more intensely."

In order to do that, West suggests that Black intellectuals need to aspire to the level of Black musicians like John Coltrane. West said that they "come to terms with their own devils" in order to



Black Scholars unite. L to r: Dr. Robert Hall, Dr. Selwyn Cudjoe, Dr. Cornell West, Dr. David Hall, Dr. Kwamina Panford, Dr. Edward Bullins, and Dr. James Hackney, Jr. photo credit: Christine Dela Cueva

express their lives through music.

Black musicians are indispensable to the Black community's sanity," said West.

According to Dr. Edward Bullins, it is not only the musicians who are indispensable" but also those involved in theater.

Bullins, playwright and drama professor at NU, discussed the research that he has been doing for 40 years on African-American literature. He also talked about the link that exists between Black scholars and the community as well as the use of theater as a form of protest.

Bullins wanted the audience to "understand that there is historical continuity in Black theater. This has been a source of inspiration and hope in the Black community that's been under assault."

We must believe in our possibility as a people," he said.

Dr. Selwyn Cudjoe pointed out that all aspects of scholarship are linked and that if we truly believe scholarship to be emancipatory then we should act on behalf of the community.

The only thing you've got as a scholar is knowledge," said Cudjoe. You must begin to use your talents whenever you are to bring our people together...scholarship without action is blind," he said.

Dr. James Hackney also focused in on the need for scholar to use their knowledge to help the masses. Hackney said

that it is critical for race scholars to protect the rights of the Black community and that many of them are doing so right now.

The scholars at the university are concerned about scholarship but also the university community and the community in general," Hackney said. "For most of us, that is the primary force for what we do," he said.

Hackney suggested several means through which a link between Black scholars and the Black community could be made.

He stated that scholars must go into the community and speak to the people. He proposed that scholars organize a think tank and court media coverage. Hackney also said that the community should do its part by reading Black scholars.

Dr. Kwamina Panford, professor of Afro studies at Northeastern University, proposed that the Black community start producing its own sources of information in order for Black America to tap into Black intellectuals.

Dr. Panford's message was rooted in the theory of Pan-Africanism which he said had its birth in the United States. Panford stated that in the midst of all the problems, Blacks face in the US, Africa, and the Caribbean, that "when we coop

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DESMOND PUHFEIFER

By Ola Kolawalee
Onyx Columnist

The Bad News

Sherman Hemsley (Jeffersons), had two lines, "Y'all better be moving on up" and "I'm a little weasy." Hemsley was the man; a strong man. He was blacker than thou in "All in the Family," and never sold out as George Jefferson. Now had Hemsley been Desmond Puhfeifer we'd be seeing a different side of history. But why should any network go through the trouble of having that much vision? UPN is playing small fish in a big ocean, so why should they bother

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Another Blow To Affirmative Action

By Andre Jean-Francois
Onyx Staff

Imagine one day that affirmative action never existed. What would you be doing right now? Would you be going to school here? In addition, how many minorities would be going to school here with you? That day might come quicker than you think.

On October 8, City Council President James Kelly held a meeting on the issue of affirmative action. He addressed the ruling that requires that there be at least one minority for every white candidate considered for a spot on the Boston police or fire departments.

The city said that affirmative action is no longer needed for the filling of these positions. According to them, the civil test is so unbiased that everyone has a chance for the same spots, regardless of race or sex.

While screening the tests they search for the highest scores. So, do the highest scores always get the job? According to Kelly this is not always the case. He states that this is due to affirmative action. In many of the cases studied, the white candidates scored higher on the tests. Yet because of affirmative action they were not chosen for the job.

According to Kelly and the Council, this is a form of racism that they want to get rid of. They believe that white candidates with top scores are over looked because of affirmative action.

From 1986 to 1996, 1400 police officers were hired--38 percent of them



Boston Police Headquarters
[photo credit: Christine Dela Cueva]

were minorities.

Affirmative action states that 50 percent of the jobs should be set aside for minorities. During this 10-year period, in which the law was not applied, the police department came up 62 percent short.

When you travel around Boston, look and compare how many minority officers there are to how many white officers there are.

Supreme Court Rules

By Olayinka S. Kolawole
Onyx Staff

In 1875 Chief Justice Horace Gray began the practice of employing a law clerk. A Harvard Law School graduate no less. Coincidentally, there were few, if any, Native Americans, Asian Americans or African Americans attending Harvard Law at the time. His brother also at Harvard, Professor John Chipman Gray, facilitated the hiring process by recommending the "candidates" of choice to Justice Gray.

Let's skip over another hundred years of woeful racism in America and walk into the 1990's, October 5th, 1998 to be exact. Kwesi Mfume was arrested on the steps of the Supreme Court. He was attempting to deliver resumes of brilliant minority law students to the Justices.

I spoke with Charlotte Nelson, President of the Boston chapter of the NAACP and asked her why it was important for minorities to work as law clerks in the Supreme Court. "Law clerks hold sway over judges. They can help formulate the language of the law, they can even go as far as determining who sees the judge."

Former law clerks have gone on to become justices themselves or participate as professors at universities.

The march on Washington was one of a three part plan designed by the NAACP and members of numerous political and advocacy groups.

The Million Youth March and The Cure for Cancer are the two more recent demonstrations conducted by the coalition. Were they successful at the steps of the Supreme Court? Among those arrested in addition to Mfume, were Rep. Gregory Meeks of New York, Archbishop Stallings founder of the American Catholic Congregation, Chief Gilbert Blue, from the Catawbe Indian Nation, Mr. Stevens, Jr., first vice-president of the National Congress of American Indians, Dr. Powell, associate general secretary of the National Council of Churches, Blacks in Government national president Oscar Eason and C. Delores Tucker past president of the National Congress of Black women. They were placed on probation and fined fifty dollars.

Let The Games Begin

By Philip Kasiecki
Onyx Staff

College Basketball came alive with Midnight Madness when the clock struck midnight on October 17. Midnight Madness traditionally marks the beginning of practice for Division I basketball teams.

Northeastern's Midnight Madness featured Coach Willie Maye, a DJ for radio station WILD in Boston, as the emcee during several games for the many fans that packed Cabot Gym to show their team spirit.

Head coach Rudy Keeling, entering his third season at Northeastern, asked fans to support the teams this season, promising good things: "Tonight will be fun, but our games will be more fun."

Four players from the men's and women's teams got together in a team shooting contest. Tyanna Neil and Kareen Harris narrowly edged the duo of Wanda Alimengot and Harold Miller by a score of 14-13. A slam dunk contest followed, where redshirt freshman Tim West beat out senior John Green in the finals to win.

The Huskies suffered key personal losses, namely top scorer Ty Mack (playing professionally in Holland) and versatile AMERICA EAST All-Rookie pick Joe Hicks from last season's 14-14 team. They also lost Lamont Clarke, a leader at the defensive end.

The Huskies may have the best backcourt in AMERICA EAST, but questions in the frontcourt are largely why pre-season magazines pick them to finish eighth in the conference.

The Huskies open the season on November 17 at Brown University.



New recruit takes it strong to the hole
[photo credit: Eric Esteves]

(Preview publications consulted for this article were put out by Athlon, Lindy's, Preview Sports Publications, Street & Smith's, The Sporting News and ESPN analyst Dick Vitale).

Death of A Black Mayor

By Mark A. Harvey,
Onyx Correspondent

Thomas Bradley, first black mayor of Los Angeles, suffered a heart attack and was pronounced dead at 9 AM, Tuesday September 29, at Kaiser Permanente West Los Angeles Medical Center.

Bradley was a student at the University of California at Los Angeles where he ran track, winning national honors in the 440-yard dash. He was initiated into the Upsilon Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Incorporated.

Before being elected as mayor for the city of Los Angeles, Bradley served on the Los Angeles Police Department, rising through the ranks to become Lieutenant. While working there, he received his law degree from the Southwestern University Law School.

Through political campaigning he was later elected to the City Council.

In August of 1965 when the Watts community of Los Angeles erupted into a bloody and devastating riot, it was Bradley who took the leadership to discover the cause of the riot and assess its damages.

He led the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity into participation in civil rights activities. In December of 1964, Bradley represented the fraternity at the Community Action Assembly in Washington, D.C. sponsored by the National Urban League. The conference was described as another major stride toward equal opportunity. He met with top government officials, including President Lyndon B. Johnson, to discuss the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Economic Opportunities Act, better known as the Anti-Poverty Program.

Bradley had been a community leader and an active member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). He was also a part of the Los Angeles Urban League, the United Civil Rights Committee and the Avalon Carter Community Center.

Thomas Bradley was the forklift to building bridges between Blacks, Latinos, liberal Whites and women, cementing the road for equal opportunity for all Americans.

Malcom X home Boston landmark

The Boston Landmark Commission last week named Malcom X's boyhood home in Roxbury an historic landmark, protecting the building from ever being demolished, and ensuring that all who walk past the house will know that the African American leader once lived right there on Dale Street in Roxbury.

Black elected officials from through-

out the city joined Mayor Thomas M. Menino and Malcom X's nephew, Rodney Collins, in a ceremony on Oct. 16 that canonized the life of Malcom X.

Malcom X moved to 72 Dale Street, then owned by his sister Ella L. Little-Collins, when he was 16 years old.

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Hurricane George Hits Haiti

By Danielle Antoine
Onyx Staff

Hurricane Georges affected 167,000 Haitians and destroyed 80% of the agricultural resources of the country.

The first official report released on the morning of September 28, by the Haitian, "Informations Relatives au Cyclone Georges," (Information Relative to Hurricane Georges), announced that of the 167,000 affected, 147 are dead, 34 severely wounded and 69 people are missing.

L'Organisme de Developement de la Vallée de L'Artibonite (ODVA) reported that not only 80% of the agricultural resources were destroyed, but in addition, the second crop, which was scheduled to

be planted during the last week of September, will not be planted because of the conditions imposed by Hurricane Georges. The Republic of Haiti now faces food shortages and wide spread hunger.

The areas hardest hit are the Central Plateau and the fertile Artibonite Valley, which is the capital of the agricultural cultural district of Haiti. On the morning after the storm first hit, September 23, Haitians living in these areas met with blown away satellites, destroyed phone lines, houses torn apart and people either missing or dead.

Haitians abroad tried to get in touch with their loved ones. Wadner Oge, a sophomore in the College of Criminal Justice at Northeastern, said, "I was devastated by the news that Haiti had been hit by the Hurricane."

Relief efforts have been initiated by Haitians worldwide, especially in the United States, France and Canada where the largest Haitian communities reside.

Right here at Northeastern, Haitian Student Unity (HSU) is holding a food, clothing and medical supplies drive. The collected goods will be sent to a school in Haiti. Anyone wishing to contribute to the effort may drop off items at the John D. O' Bryant African American Institute at 40 Leon Street or at the Curry Student Center, next to the Information Booth. Both boxes are brightly colored and read, "Strength and Unity."

Telephones in Latin America

By Ana Toro
Onyx Staff

Considering that most of us have a phone in every room and still insist on carrying one wherever we go, it is hard to conceive of a place where telephone services are pretty much non-existent. But these places do exist.

Telecommunications services in many countries of the developing world are still lagging far behind. Anyone who has ever tried to make a phone call to the Motherland can attest that generally it is hard to get through, and many times conversations with Grandma get cut off due to bad connections.

How bad is the problem? It is estimated that about 80 percent of the world's population does not have either a phone or regular access to one, and 75 percent of all phones are installed in eight industrialized nations.

In China and India, which combined hold 40 percent of the world's population, there are two phones per 100 people—in the United States there are 57.

Such a discrepancy in communications service keeps developing nations in tough economic standing. For poor people, access to telephones brings significant changes in their livelihood.

The number of telephones in a country in proportion to its population goes hand in hand with the economy of such country.

According to a World Bank analysis, countries with unreliable and scarce telephone networks face economic ruin.

In a world driven by information countries not equipped with solid communication networks cannot compete in the global economy. As a result, they will maintain their status as third world countries and never get out of their economic rut.

But there is hope. The last couple of years have seen a spurt of advocates and supporters of improving global communications.

Their claims that telecommunications offers "a new dawn of economic opportunity for developing countries" have been taken seriously and changes are taking place.

Early last year, delegates from 69 countries, including 40 developing countries, signed a "liberalization" pact in Geneva at the World Trade Organization. This pact will mean an opening up of telecommunication systems in developing nations so they can compete in foreign markets.

Competition in foreign markets means improved service, less busy signals and interrupted conversations for our countries.

(Source consulted for this article: www.oneworld.org/panos/briefing/telecoms.htm).

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erate and unite" a solution can be found.

Dr. Robert Hall, who did research on many topics including the role of religion in the African community and the African slave trade, discussed his research projects with a focus on Arabic manuscripts left by African Muslims during slavery.

Dr. Hall hopes that the audience will take away, "the excitement and passion of the night," and that "a few take up the calling."

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putting on a show with some bite?

Given such a vehicle as "The Secret Diary of Desmond Pfeiffer," UPN could have provided commentary and satire, and truly hung out with the big fish. The network should have come out proud and blaring: "This was America. It was ugly and we'll show ugly. Laugh, cry, learn and enjoy. Let television be." Instead it whimpers, "I am here."


Placing a camera in the home of the President who freed the slaves should have been a Monday night history lesson. For all the noise and prattle about the fate of American education and the fate of America, period, UPN would have done well to edify and entertain. But that would have been ballsy.

The "N" word could have flown out every five seconds, raucous debate over the fate of slavery may have consumed the Lincoln household, and Desmond might have a few cutting punch lines. Controversy is as American as say slavery. Ellen came out, and as for Dennis Rodman, well he's thinking about it. Controversy kept "Desmond Pfeiffer" on the air for a second show, but true substance would keep it on the air, and in our minds forever. Now, the writers did try, they placed an anomalous being in an all-white situation. Perhaps Benson, Arnold or Willis. Webster, Mork and quite possibly, Alf may have a lawsuit. The show is lame.

The Good News

Desmond (Chi McBride) dupes the confederate soldiers into believing he is a white spy (one of theirs) disguised as a colored man. He then kneels a general in the groin. Well if that don't do me proud.

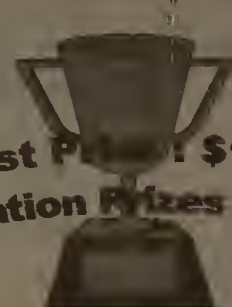
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PROJECT HIP-HOP: NU Student Tours South

By Feliciano Tavares
Onyx Correspondent

It has been just over two months since the 1998 Project HIP-HOP tour of the South came to an end. For 19 information-filled days our diverse group of 21 individuals immersed themselves in the history of the Civil Rights Movement. It was my first time in the south and my first Project HIP-HOP experience.

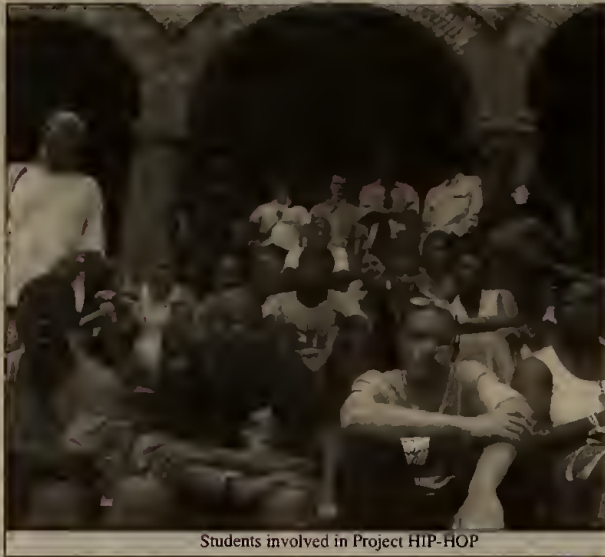
Early on the morning of July 8, the group assembled at the back of Ruggles Station for our departure. I was excited by the places and people we were going to visit as well as the prospect of getting to know those embarking on this adventure with me. Just as the group began to talk and share each other's excitement and fears, the three vans and car that would take us 5,200 miles pulled up. Just like that we were off, not knowing then that this trip would shape more than our views of the movement, it would also change how we see our own lives.

Our first stop was Harper's Ferry in West Virginia. That day's drive was built up to be our longest, but with all of those new faces, different cultures, experiences and opinions to become familiar with the ride did not seem long at all. We arrived there in the dark. After a late dinner we settled in for the night in our cabins. I was anxious for the morning to arrive because I had heard how spectacular the mountains were. Even in the early morning their beauty seemed boundless. We spent the morning exploring the place where John Brown, a white man, gave his life for black people and helped spark the Civil War. I had never learned that in school. After our first stop I said to myself, "This is going to be deep." I was determined to soak it all in while I had this rare opportunity.

That evening we arrived in Greensboro, NC where Dr. Claude Barnes gave us a vivid account of the sit in movement and the activities of the late 1960's and '70's, when he was a student leader. He painted a picture of regular people stepping up to the plate with no practice other than that of living every day in an unjust society. He also talked about the Black Power Movement, which had taken root in Greensboro by the late '60's and helped consolidate the gains of the civil rights phase of the movement.

When the powerful lesson was over, he came to eat a good old southern dinner with us and we had the chance to discuss some present-day issues with him. I left the restaurant that night full physically and intellectually.

It had only been a few days into the trip and I was not only anticipating the next speaker, but was dreading going home. I was enjoying the atmosphere of community in the vans and the southern kindness which seems so far removed from Boston. Every stop brought new stimulation: we got to meet, Cleveland Sellers, he was the field secretary for the SNCC at my age; Mary Jones, an activist fighting poverty in Birmingham; Obie Clark, the NAACP president in Meridian, MI, and the amazing 102-years-old Caesar Moore in Philadelphia, MI. We stayed in Ella Dahmer's farm and heard about the reopening of the case into the 1966 murder of her husband by the Klan. We



Students involved in Project HIP-HOP

spent the better part of our three days with Hollis Watkins, an SNCC veteran and Freedom Singer who witnessed the organizing now being done by his group, Southern Echo.

In McComb, MI, Project HIP-HOP's growing reputation got us invited not just to listen to some older activists but also to try to inspire local youth activism. We had a big meeting with young people from the area, and then a group of us stayed in the Mrs. Alyene Quinn's home. She is a veteran of the Movement whose house was firebombed by the Klan. A strong black woman, she spoke powerfully of the role played by women in the Movement of which she was living proof. She fed and sheltered Bob Moses and his group of civil rights workers when they first came to town, fought for voting rights, was a delegate for the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party with Fannie Lou Hammer. Maina Quinn as we called her owned and ran a restaurant, a motel and an apartment building; but lost all three because of violence. Through the course of the night there were many intense moments but also a lot of laughs. In the morning we prepared breakfast together, took a final group picture and reluctantly left. When we joined the rest of the group it appeared that everyone else had stories to tell and enjoyed the night in their respective homes as well.

Another inspiring woman we met with was Joanne Bland, from Selma Alabama. Bland presides over the National Voting Rights Museum there. Selma is 65 percent minority but fewer than 50 percent of the population turns out to vote, a fact that helps explain why they still have the same mayor who in 1965 called Dr. King "Dr. Martin Luther Coon." We heard about the sagging numbers of voters all around the South, including many communities which had struggled long and hard for the right to vote. Before Mrs. Bland led us to the Edmund Pettus Bridge, she made a point about the danger of complacency. "It is complacency that is killing any movement, that is killing us," she said. This is something I will never forget. It was just one more indication that the struggle is not even close to being over, if we are really concerned about social justice.

A first for Project HIP-HOP was a trip to Little Rock, Arkansas, where we visited Central High School and the new Central High Museum, housed in an old gas station across the street from the school. The Museum is still being developed. It gives the story of the struggle to desegregate the school and the effect this had on the country and on the students themselves. We were briefly permitted into the gigantic school, and were told that next year we might be able to spend the night in the building. I wish we could have done that this year! Instead, we camped east of Little Rock, in what turned out to be an area surrounded by rice paddies and besieged by clouds of mosquitoes. The group will never forget what was for many of them their first camping experience.

Our last speaker was the Rev. Harold Middlebrook, a close friend and associate of Dr. King. Rev. Middlebrook took us on an intensely emotional journey, as he described the last days of Dr. King's life and being at the Lorraine Motel during the assassination. He tied the economic piece into the timing of the assassination. As he put it, "Rev. King with the poor people's campaign was trying to change the flow of economics in this country for poor whites as well as blacks." At this point, Rev. Middlebrook said, he became much too dangerous to the powers that be. Talking about the prevailing economic inequalities, Rev. Middlebrook told us that "the person who pays the piper controls the music, and the masses dance accordingly." There were many memorable quotes on the trip, but his one has stayed with me as a summation of our system. We were with Rev. Middlebrook for nearly three hours and when we left we felt personally connected with the terrible events of thirty years ago, and determined to fight the ignorance and complacency which Rev. Middlebrook like Joanne Bland warned us against.

After leaving Rev. Middlebrook's church in Knoxville we stopped at the Highlander Center in eastern Tennessee where Dr. King, Rosa Parks, and so many others discussed Movement strategy. We were expecting to look and just move on to our camp site in Virginia. However,

we fell in love with the place and were very happy when we were able to stay the night. We spent our tour debriefing session sitting around a campfire, feeling like part of a long Highlander tradition.

The next morning we traveled to West Virginia stopping first in the town of Matewan to learn about the mine wars early in the century. Then we had a wonderful barbecue deep in the West Virginia mountains, talked to the local press, played football, basketball, and volleyball with the local children.

The final morning came quickly and suddenly we were at a roadside McDonald's rearranging our belongings in vans which would take us to our individual homes and saying our final good-byes. It was very upsetting to me to know that this unique educational experience was over and the group in its entirety would probably never be together again. We all sped off in our separate vans, but as we turned to enter the highway near Hartford, my van, which was trailing the others, went over a curb and the tire went "boom." Both the tire and the rim were flattened. We waited at the site, wondering if we could find any place open after dark on a Sunday to get a new tire and rim. Then suddenly we were no longer alone. Someone in another van had seen our mishap, and all the other vehicles drew up to keep us company. It was a very sweet moment. As we waited for the AAA to arrive on the scene we turned up the salsa and had ourselves a little block party.

That's basically how our whole trip was, incredibly enjoyable—even during the rough moments. I would have to say that this journey was the most important experience of my life. We were put in touch not just with the struggles of the past but with the urgent tasks of the present and future. We now see ourselves as critical pieces in the puzzle of how to achieve social justice.

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EDITORIAL

What is Activism?

Activism is a rebirth of the mind. Keeping The Onyx Informer alive is our aim and we are committed to giving it to you like no one else does, like no else can. Straight, no chaser. We are dedicated to making a difference for our people. Our beliefs, intentions and practices may vary, but we are activists at heart. The goodness of our people is evident. We are here to engage your mind, your heart, your soul.

This is the dawn of an era at Northeastern University when a collective spirit of unification and cooperation is abundant. Do not let this energy fizzle. If one were to combine the minds of our students, professors and administrators, you would have the building blocks to positively impact your own life, the lives of others and the urban community of which this school is a permanent resident.

We will work with you to improve the social, economic, spiritual and political atmosphere of our communities; only if you roll up your sleeves and become fully involved as well. The Onyx's previous editors wrote, "Student activism is as simple as writing a letter of support and questioning those in charge." Activism is not dead, it was just hibernating. We are seeing it awakening and realizing its importance. As the old saying goes, "there can be no progress without struggle." These words bear testimony that we are not alone.

Unity. Five letters that are forever linked, but fall by the wayside when mentioned into the ears of too many of our brothers and sisters. You and I Together Yelling our hearts out for what we believe in will surely help to forge more proactive measures amongst our people. But who dares to join The Onyx in such an adventure?

Do not you know what they will say. Don't you know the consequences. Do you not remember those days of pride, self-respect, and "Fight the Power!" Do you know what it takes and what sacrifices must be made? Do you? And will you will yourself to join the struggle?

Much Love,
The Editors



Onyx Staff pictured with Cornel West at Black Scholars Event
[Photo credit: Christine B. Dela Cueva]

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Speaking Out

LUISA MELO

Africans in America

In my mind I can see the face of Venter Smith, an African slave who gains his freedom by fighting in the American Revolution, and buys his sons each for \$200. I cannot fathom what he feels as he "leases" his eldest son, Solomon, to make money to buy his wife and daughter. Solomon dies while working. Mr. Smith is indignant that the company will not pay the \$75 he earned before death. Venter Smith finds redemption. After buying his wife for forty pounds, a new child is born free. They name him Solomon.

The four part PBS series, "Africans in America," featured Oct. 19 traced slavery beginning with the settlement of Jamestown, Virginia in 1607 through the Civil War. The story above occurred on the heels of the Revolution, where free Africans and slaves fought because they believed in the words, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. That they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." Perhaps, they did not realize that the brilliant Declaration of Independence would not apply to them.

I leave you with this thought: "Oh! Anybody. Hear this plaintive song. Oh! Who wants to help their brother dance this dance? Oh! I sing with soul: Heal this wounded land."

Indeed, the history of the African in this country is the history of all Americans. There is a danger today, regardless of our condition in life, of romanticizing slavery or turning away from it, fiercely avoiding discussion. Perhaps, it is time to face a wound that never healed, where the pain runs deep. Only then can healing begin.

THEODORE P. MILLER

Who knew? Betty Currie?

"Don't say any more. I don't want to hear any more," Presidential Secretary Betty Currie said, stopping former white house intern Monica S. Lewinsky. There are just some things that you really don't want to know. A thought Betty Currie knows all to well. She made a concerted effort not to know what exactly was going on between Monica & the President even though she was the integral piece that put the two together and she knew it. Why didn't she do anything to stop it?

By integral, I mean that the President and Monica depended on her as the go-between. She testified to coming to work on weekends solely to admit the former intern. This church going woman asked the Secret Service not to record Lewinsky's visits. She waited outside the Oval Office study while they were inside and then she left with them so that the visits would not seem unprofessional. Without Betty Currie's help there would be no improper relationship, there would be no 445-page independent counsel report and there would be no impeachment proceedings.

Even secret service officer Steven Pape, assigned to the White House gate was not in the dark testifying before a grand jury, "that [Lewinsky] is probably the president's mistress, so treat her, you know, decent, but again, don't break rules for her." She was given warnings by Clinton's personal aide, Steve Goodwin, that Lewinsky was "bad news." There was a prevailing White House rumor that Lewinsky was a "stalker," meaning someone who would monitor the president's schedule and show up at his events. There is no way she could have not known when she facilitated secret meetings between the former intern and the president that something wasn't going on.

Why didn't Betty Currie do anything to stop these covert visits between Monica and the President? "Monica and Betty were friends," said her husband Bob Currie to a Washington Post reporter. She even testified that it was her idea to contact Vernon E. Jordan Jr. to assist in Lewinsky's New York job search. Lewinsky had come to Currie's home, they also had gone out for drinks and she once gave Currie a gift certificate for a manicure and a pedicure. A note given by Monica to Currie reads: "You have put up with me through smiles and fits of tears. I hope one day I can repay your kindness."

President Clinton, on the other hand, must now think of a way to repay her fidelity. "Betty is very loyal to her boss," voiced Bob Currie. "You have to wonder why someone who was so strong in her values and character would compromise. But you get caught up in it, you loose perspective...The Oval Office area is a very intimidating area. I have seen grown men of stature come before the president and be reduced to bumbling idiots," said a former co-worker who has high regard for Currie.

She knew about and participated in the relationship between former intern Monica S. Lewinsky and President Clinton but she did nothing. Maybe the affair was too much to deal with along with the deaths of her sister to a heart attack, her brother to a car accident and her mother to long-term illness, all during a period from May 1997-May 1998. Maybe she couldn't betray the friend she found in Monica or her boss, President Clinton. Or maybe she just felt like she couldn't go to other Clinton loyalists like the director of Oval Office operations Nancy Hennrich, deputy chief of staff Evelyn Lieberman Leon Pannetta, Vernon Jordan or, for that matter, Hillary.

If you were Betty Currie what would you do? What if your best friend asked you to use your computer so he or she could cheat on a term paper would you let them, better yet would you tell?

El Latino

By Richard A. Morales
from www.latinolink.com

You say I'm....	I know I'm....
ashamed	proud
stupid	intelligent
lazy	hard-working
single-minded	multi-faced
uninterested	inquisitive
prideful	humble
a killer	caring
a gang member	a husband and father
untrainable	educated

I have never dodged any requirement this country has demanded of me.

I served this country faithfully at a time when you did not want to.
I have not protested violently against policies you instituted to quiet me.

I believe in God and principles your founding fathers established for US.

I do not come here to take your jobs, although
I am willing to take those too good for you.

I do not make up the majority of your welfare rolls
look closely and you'll see your reflection, not mine.
I do not overburden your welfare system.
You pushed me on it because you knew what was best

I take your ridicule because I do not understand all you say to me
I do not mock you because I only wish to be understood.

When I came to this country you told me I must become an American and renounce my Mexico, Cuba, Brazil, Puerto Rico, now you say remember your heritage.

I never really forgot it
I only pushed it aside to assimilate myself into your society and culture.

You claim that I contribute nothing to this society but think of people with names like Bustamente, Chavez, Galvez, Bonilla, Olmos, Morales, y Cortez.

You call me Black, you call me white yet I am neither so you tend to ignore me.
I implore you not to though, for soon I will decide who will lead this country.

Still you never recognized me.
Instead you want me to go back where I came from, but I say NO it must be you to go back.

So you argue that your ancestors have been here since America was founded and civilized those ALREADY here.

If that is so, I will leave you with this simple message,
MY ANCESTORS WERE HERE AND CIVILIZED BEFORE THERE WAS AN AMERICA!
Un día, Estados Unidos, tu vas a saber quien soy!

Who Am I

By Melisa Rivera

who am I...
looking in the mirror i see a history:
i see a face that covers up so many stories.
i am living proof of all who came before me,
i am strength.

i am the cream colored box which holds my ancestors' treasures,
i am taina by the shape of my nose,
i am espanola by the color of my skin,
i am africana by the natural texture of my hair,
i am boricua by the rhythm in my step,
the shape of my hips,
the warmth of my soul and all i possess.

i am a modern day jibara inside and out,
a modern day jibara in every which way groomed to be buena,
trying to break out,
taught to look at the piso,
i stare in your eye,
taught to accept what you're given
i search for more
taught to follow un hombre
i choose my own path.

who am i...
a modern day jibara
inside and out.

Latino Pride Full Force



Tony Hernandez, LASO president, and newly-crowned Homecoming King.

The Latin-American Student Organization (LASO) celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month this year with a night of poetry by candle light at the African-American Institute.

A few dedicated students gathered at the Institute on Oct.23 to commemorate the month dedicated to celebrating Latino Heritage. Students read poetry and short stories that reflected their Latino pride.

Among the students there were the LASO executive board, including Tony

Hernandez, LASO president and Northeastern's new Homecoming King.

Hispanic Heritage Month began on September 17, 1968 when the government approved the period from September 15 to October 16 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Felix Matos Rodriguez, Assistant Professor of history at Northeastern, said although it is important to celebrate Latin-American Heritage "we need to keep our heritage on the agenda constantly."

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Asphalt

By Kanasha S. Herbert
Onyx Columnist

For too long our dragon slayers have been celebrated in a posthumous fashion giving the false perception that it is only through death that one can truly appreciate the works of gods and goddesses. Anyone who has ever been in the presence of poet, activist, educator and editor Askia Toure knows that he is a living legend. As one of the architects of the Black Arts Movement, Askia has chronicled the life of the people of the Black Arts Movement. Askia has chronicled the life of our people from the pyramids to the projects.

On Friday November 6, 1998 at the Roxbury Community College's Media Arts Center a group of poets, scholars, activists and community leaders will make an attempt to pay tribute to this revolutionary warrior. The event will begin at 7:00 pm and will include tributes from Askia's comrades, Sonia Sanchez, The Last Poets, Ed Bullins, Saladin Muhammad, Dr. Rashidah Abu-Bakar and many other exemplary representatives of black arts. Several artists from Boston such as Jamarhl Crawford, Michael Holley, VCR, Zerahiah Israel as well as Northeastern's own Ayanna Israel and Kanasha. Admission to this historic event is \$10.00. For further information please contact (617) 442-6087.

Verse and Chorus

There is a new poet tree blooming in town. Actually it's a Peartree, an intimate open mic gathering hosted by Ayanna Israel. Admission is \$3.00 if you choose to bring your own fruits to the mic or \$5.00 if you just prefer to listen and cipher. Food and beverages are available at this venue. The Peartree kicks off every Sunday night at 8pm at 73 Highland St. #1 in Roxbury. Email Ayanna at peartree@iname.com for directions.

On Sundays throughout the month of November, the Jeff Robinson Trio will be recording the open mic sessions for their "Live at the Lizard Lounge" CD. Drop in around 9pm at 1667 Massachusetts Avenue in Cambridge with your best work. You just might make the CD.

Cultural Collections at 754 Crescent Street (Rt. 27) in Brockton will be hosting Jamaican born author Patricia Powell on Friday November 6 at 7:00pm. Powell will be reading from her historical novel The Pagoda. Pagoda discusses the immigration of Chinese into Jamaica. There will be a book signing following this event. This event is free and open to the public. For more information call (508) 580-1055.

On Monday, November 16 at 7:00 p.m., The Brockton Public Library-West Branch will host author Franklin A. Donnan. Donnan will discuss his book Twenty Families of Color in Massachusetts, 1742-1998.

Donnan's book is a genealogy tracing the lineage of African American soldiers and sailors who fought from Massachusetts in the Civil War. There will be a book signing following this event. Admission is free and open to the general public. For more information call (508) 580-1055.

By Kerrita McClaughlyn
Onyx Staff

If you've ever been a fan of jazz or merely a virgin listener, the fiery sounds of the John Coltrane Memorial Concert, would have had you dancing in your seat.

This year's concert, started in 1977 and now celebrating its 21st year, was "Superb," according to Cudjoe Bandoh, middler, political science major. "The musicianship was A-1."

The concert, held annually in the Blackman auditorium, draws a diverse crowd of music lovers and musicians alike. It is the oldest annual performance tribute to the late Jazz saxophonist, John Coltrane. Coltrane exists as a giant figure in jazz history for his many contributions. His many popular and acclaimed works include, "A Love Supreme," "Giant Steps," "Naima" and of course, "My Favorite Things."

This year's opening night performance featured Afro-Cuban and Caribbean rhythms performed by the Coltrane Ensemble and hosted by Jose Masso, host of "Con Salsa" on WBUR radio, Boston. Friday's performance was hosted by Eric Jackson, host of "Eric in the Evening," on WGBH Radio, Boston.

It featured tributes to Coltrane by various artist, including his wife, Alice Coltrane.

The sounds of drums and steel pans pulsed while the audience rocked in their seats, Thursday night. The audience was a diverse crowd of all races and ages, although it was predominantly older with just a sprinkling of students. Blackman auditorium was filled on its lower level.

A funky addition to this year's concert, was the presence of painter/performance artist, Nancy Ostrovsky, who interpreted the music on canvas, while the Ensemble played.

Michael Samuels, middler finance major said, "It was interesting. The lady

El Color de Jazz



Members of the Coltrane Ensemble pose for a group photo [photo credit, Christine B. Dela Cueva]

painting added a different kind of element, I liked it."

The first half of the concert offered a variety of tropical sounds. Pulsating drums, steel pans and saxophone's filled the air. Picture a salsa den at three am, and you'll begin to imagine the sounds that drove bodies to move against their will. The audience rocked in its seat as the various soloist "turned that mother out."

Ostrovsky was like a magician capturing notes on canvas in a swirling hue of reds, greens, golds and purples. Her colors, like the music, was vibrant and inviting. She managed to capture the beauty of the music and the skill level of the musicians in her first canvas of the band playing.

Bill Lowe's "Grand Central" in the opening set was food to a homesick New Yorker. The bells and horns sent images of the Metro North reeling through your head and the drums and pans brought Salsa/Carnival to Grand Central Station. The enthusiastic audience applauded at the onset of what seemed to be an old favorite. The first set closed with a flawless rendition of "Naima", arranged by Bill Pierce.

Highlights of the rest of the concert included "Afro Blue", arranged by Gary Valente. The beat was hypnotic, conjuring images of tribal dances and ancient chants. The drums, the link that binds the peoples of the Diaspora, worked its magic. The sounds of Africa, the Caribbean and Latin America, all pulsate to it's

he first started. He ended up having a high reputation for being the most acclaimed international ambassadors of American culture.

The Dance Theater consists of thirty-one members.

After Alvin's death in 1989, he left behind one of the most popular and successful dance companies ever assembled. Alvin left a vision that lives on today in his dancers. That vision is that we must not let obstacles of our times deprive us. Yet, we should take those obstacles and develop them into courage to go out and accomplish our goals. In many ways that vision is still alive in his Dance Theater.

Judith Jamison, the Artistic Director, now heads the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

40 years with Alvin Ailey

By Andre Jean Francois
Onyx Staff

It's been forty-years since the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater first graced the stage.

On March 1958 in New York, Alvin Ailey and a group of black modern dancers founded the Dance Theater. This team began performing for small crowds. Through time and evolution they have performed for over eighteen million people in forty-eight states. They also performed in sixty-seven countries on six continents.

Alvin had a small vision of dance when

beat and jazz is no exception.

Ostrovsky interpreted the haunting melody in an abstract painting of dancing blue, brown, orange and purple.

The music prompted visitor, Felicity Crawford to say, "I loved the arrangement, 'Afro Blue'. Their is a pretty good cohesion among the group." Crawford, who is Guyanese, came out to see friends play.

Kulu se Mama" was the final piece of the night, arranged and sung by Stan Strickland. It was a powerful gripping chant filled with moans and wails. In its finale, the band joined singing "So we sang this melody."

The performance which ran late, sent some of the audience scurrying home before Strickland's memorable ending. Co-producer Leonard Brown, in closing, thanked the audience for coming out and thanked those that stayed until the end. "We do this once a year. It's a Labor of Love."

Beloved: A Tale of Courage

By Linda Betharte
Onyx Staff

Beloved," the new movie starring Oprah Winfrey and Danny Glover, gives America a look inside the mind of a black woman who has been a slave.

Winfrey plays Cetta, a woman who successfully escapes herself and her children from slavery and vows that they will never be slaves again.

She keeps her promise but at a high cost to herself and her children.

The movie shows us the price Cetta had to pay in a way that only Toni Morrison, the author of the book "Beloved" could have thought of.

Full of symbolism and spirits "Beloved" captures the cruelty of slavery by showing us what slavery can do to a person's way of thinking and behaving—asserting that black people do think.

The movie goes beyond the physical scars of the slave-masters whip and shows black people as people rather than former slaves.

This movie is a definite must see and a definite candidate for the Oscars.



Hip-Hop Track by Track Review

By Maurice Archer
and Duane Cardinez

Onyx Staff

Album reviews should be truthful, specific, and they should basically let a person know if an album is worth taking a trip to Tower Records for. Well, if you are a faithful Onyx reader, you are about to find the page to turn to if you want to know about the latest Hip-Hop happenings. The purpose of this review is to convince the reader to give the album under the spotlight a chance in their listening instrument (CD player, walkman, etc.). Therefore, the "Track by Track" (T.b.T.) will mostly be done on an album that most consumers would not be flying to the store to pick up. As for the ill joints that come out, there will be a month in review section right after the "T.b.T." to cover the "phat joints".

This month, the CD under investigation was "Mobstability" by Twista and The Speedknot Mobstaz. You may have heard of Twista from the old DO OR DIE single (that "PO PIMP" joint from back in the day), or maybe you heard his solo album "Adrenaline Rush" released in 1997. This album features him and his two boys from the "Cold Chi" (Chicago), Mayz and Liffy. They try to stick to their theme of "mobbin'" through the whole album. Welcome.

This CD has 14 tracks. Track 2 (3:49) "Crook County" has an ill-fast beat and features a girl called Newsense. I was not really feeling the Speedknot Mobstaz too much, but everyone shines on this track. Twista and Newsense have the tightest verses though.

Track 3, (4:32) "Mob Up" has a phat beat for you cats out there that like listening to beats consisting of many sound elements (a cash register, Atari's Centipede shooting sound, gun shots, and more). Lyrically they all get open in their own Chicago way. The hook could have been better.

Track 4, (5:17) Danny Boy from Tupac's "I aint mad at ya" is featured on the "Front Porch". It has a catchy beat that sounds like "trees" (or Mary J, not Blige) would improve, because the song is about being under the influence.

Track 5, (4:41) "In Your World" is about getting with a "piece of candy" (a beautiful female; also look for "sweetness"). The beat is ill too. Christopher Williams from "New Jack City" is in this. I liked everybody's verse on this joint. Definitely one of the best tracks on the album, although it sounds kind of like a party song.

Track 6, (5:18) Telling what they do is "Legit Ballers". The beat is slow and hypnotizing. Very catchy hook. It was all right.

Track 7, (5:06) The title track, has a west coast beat. Even though I'm not that much of a west coast fan, the beat is cool. Like almost everyone else in Hip-Hop, they are talking about how their crew is like a mob. The hook is wack and Twista

is the only one that sounds good here.

Track 8, (4:35) It starts with a situation where they are trying to "game" some girls from their car. Funny! "Party Hoes" is for the females in parties. I dug it though because it still amused me.

Track 9, (6:18) "Warm Embrace" is named this because they are talking about how much they love "holding heat". This is one of my favorite joints on here because the beat is off-the-hook, and all their rhymes are tight.

Track 10, (4:26) Well titled, "Smoke Wit You" is about them smoking with some girls. I could not even tell you if the rhymes were good because the horrible beat made me ignore this track. My fault you all.

Track 11, (4:18) Titled "Loyalty," they go back to the hard-core beats. I like those. They are saying that there are too many loyal people in their crew, so do not interfere with them. Twista was the only one that sounded convincing.

Track 14, (5:28) Finally, the last track. It is interesting though, because it mixes the "Cold Rock the Party" beat by MC Lyte with a high, guitar plucking note and a live Soca song. It was a good way to end the album. However, it was a song to dance to, not just listen to.

I would pay a maximum of \$5.99 for this CD (out of a \$14.99 maximum). If you like a wide range of Hip-Hop (including hard-core, Chicago style), you'll like this. Me being a fan of the North-Atlantic Hip-Hop scene, I still enjoyed it. However, for me to spend money on a CD from abroad, it has to be, as Rakim would say, "No Joke". This CD was not a joke, but it was not serious enough for me to pay more than six dollars. Check it out though because Twista is nice.

Maurice Archer and Duane Cardinez give the run-down on the latest influx of hip-hop albums, with a unique twist in rating each.

Acrobatik (single)

\$2.99

I am one to love underground joints so Acrobatik was a pleasure to listen to. Verbally, he has been going to work. The track, "Woman" is a perfect example of keeping it right. This track is mature and has a positive perception toward women. Acrobatik engages in lyrics that not many artists have dared to tackle in a hip-hop song. Most are afraid of sounding weak, but Acrobatik proves this is not the case if you have talent. Even "Ruff Enuff" has witty lyrics that some cats would not get right away. His lyrics are intelligent like Jeru the Damaja with a little old school flavor. The beats are not as overdone as many hip-hop joints that are being released these days. This is quite refreshing and the tracks are still tight enough to bob all those heads. Unfortunately, the hooks in both "Ruff Enuff" and "Woman", hinder the energy. I kind of wait for them to end so I can listen to the lyrics again. Because his debut is only has three songs I will have to rate it as a single.

Outkast "Aquemini"

\$5.99

Now, the Source gave this album 5 mics, so if you trust the Source, pick it up. If y'all don't know me by now, then let me school you to my opinion of some southern rap. I like Outkast. I even have one of their albums, but I love hip hop from the Northeast section of the America. The album was good but I wouldn't pay full price for it. I only listened to it about two times but I guess that sums up everything. The fact that I wasn't anxious to listen it more than twice so far is the reason why I wouldn't give it 5 mics. If you like rap from the south, definitely pick this up. For me though, I might just get a dub or wait

Jay-Z "In My Lifetime, Volume II - The Hard Knock Life" \$13.99

First of all, Jay-Z is my favorite rapper, so I had to buy this album. I gave it a \$13.99 because that is about how much I paid for it. This album was put together perfectly. For the hardcore, street fans half of the album is made for us. He also gives another CD with the album just for street cats. The rest of the album is for the regular hip hop fans. He caters to all the listeners needs. Altogether, this is one of the best buys for this issue.

A Tribe Called Quest: "The Love Movement"

\$12.99

Tribe is still representing. A lot of people I talked to were not feeling this album. I guess they were not true Tribe fans because I thought it was ill. The beats are tight (good lookin out Shaheed). They they stayed original despite keeping a ill repertoire of lyrics. This is supposed to be their last album together, so we have to say farewell to one of the 'phatest' groups in hip-hop history. "The Love Movement" tries to bring hip-hop back to what we need now as minorities: Love. Definitely a copable joint.

Brand Nubian "Foundation" \$12.99

Eight years ago there was a legendary alliance. Despite their unity displayed in the well known "One for All," the trio still managed to separate. All albums released by Puba, Sadat X, and Lord Jamar after the divorce just was not the same. Some albums were just straight up wack. Basically, they just needed each other. They still have this way of telling the same story in their own unique way without fear of keeping the message positive. As usual Puba is tight with witty phrases and word slurs, especially in "Foundation" in which he spits a number of hot lyrical ear candies. "I leave a hater stuck like a project elevator," is just one of many. From the first joint to the last, my man Lord Jamar represents. Sadat X wasn't as tight as I wanted him to be, but you will be amazed how much sense he makes your second and third time around. That is one of the reasons why "Foundation" gets better every time you press play.

"Love vs. Hate," "One Day it Will All Make Sense," and "Don't Let it Go to Your Head" are straight up gems. As far as kicking it for the women out there, Brand Nubian does that too. There hasn't been a love related hip-hop song that has moved me since "Love me or Leave me Alone," but BN managed to do it again with "Sincerely" (appropriately named). Unfortunately, there is a bomb in "Foundation" and it would have to be the Busta Rhymes assisted "Let's Dance." It was a valiant attempt lyric wise, but was polluted by the weak track and irritating hook. "Straight Out of Nile Rule" isn't exactly my favorite either. "Foundation" is definitely an album you can listen to. Brand Nubian came back and it was exactly what I expected. A definite classic.

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